

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7909
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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 595

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, BG
SUBJ: CAMPUS POLITICS

1. DURING THE PAST WEEK AND MORE THRER HAVE BEEN
DAILY STUDENT PROCESSIONS AND POLITICAL MEETINGS AT DACCA
UNIVERSITY. LED BY TWO STUDENT FRONTS, THE CHATTRA
LEAGUE (AWAMI LEAGUE FACTION) AND CHATTRA LEAGUE (JSD
FACTION), THE ACTIVITY HAS REPORTEDLY CAUGHT UP MANY
STUDENTS AS LEAFLETS ARE DISTRIBUTED AND POSTERS
HUNG. THE DEMANDS OF BOTH GROUPS ARE SIMILAR: THE
RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS AND THE RETURN TO OPEN
PLLITICS. UNTIL NOW THERE HAVE BEEN NO REPORTS OF
VIOLENCE. SIMILAR THOUGH MUCH SMALLER PROCESSIONS HAVE
ALSO OCCURRED AT RAJSHAHI AND CHITTAGONG UNIVERSITIES.

2. TRADITIONALLY, THE AWAMI LEAGUE AND THE JSD STUDENT
FRONTS HAVE BEEN OPPONENTS, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN INDICATIONS
OF A POSSIBLE TURCE. USUALLY, THE JSD FRONT ACCUSES THE AL
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FRONT OF PRO-SOVIET PERFIDY, BUT SUCH POSTERS AND
LEAFLETS HAVE NOT BEEN SEEN RECENTLY. OF THE TWO GROUPS,
THE AL FRONT IS LARGER AND BETTER ORGANIZED. IT HAS BEEN
AIDED SUBSTANTIALLY IN THE PAST WEEK BY ABDUL RAZZAK, A
PROMINENT YOUNG AWAMI LEAGUE POLITICAL LEADER RELEASED BY
COURT ORDER ABOUT TEN DAYS AGO. RAZZAK HAS ALLIED HIMSELF
WITH THE BAKSAL-ORIENTED BEGUM TAJUDDIN FACTION OF THE PARTY

DESPITE THAT FACTION'S RELATIVE LOSS OF INFLUENCE TO THE MODERATES.

3. THE CAMPUS POLITICING HAS NOT BEEN LIMITED TO THE STUDENTS. MANY OF THE FACULTY HAE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE ELECTION JANUARY 31ST OF THE THIRTY-FIVE MEMBER FACULTY REPRESENTATION TO THE UNIVERSITY SENATE. ALTHOUGH INTRA-CAMPUS AND PERSONAL RIVALRIES PREDOMINATE, OPPOSING SLATES OF CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN FORMED WHICH LOOSELY FOLLOW NATIONAL POLITICAL GROUPS, I.E., AWAMI LEAGUE AND A SCATTERING OF LEFTIST PARTIES. ONE OF THE CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES IS THE DACCA UNIVERSITY ORDINANCE, PASSED IN 1973 BY MUJIB TO ALLOW FACULTY PARTICIPATION IN OPEN POLITICS BUT AMENDED BY PRESIDENT ZIA ABOUT SIX MONTHS AGO TO CURTAIL SUCH ACTIVITY. MANY OBSERVERS ARE NOW WATCHING TO SEE WHETHER ZIA WILL ENFORCE HIS AMENDMENT OR LET THE FACULTY CONTINUE ITS POLITICING. THE VICE CHANCELLOR, DR. FAZLUL HALIM CHOUDHURY, IS REPORTEDLY NOT A FORCEFUL ADMINISTRATOR AND IS WILLING TO LET THE ACTIVITY CONTINUE.

4. SO FAR, THE MODD OF THE FCULTY CAN BE CHARACTERIZED AS NEITHER PRO NOR ANTI ZIA, BUT THE STUDENT MOOD IS DECIDEDLY AGAINST ZIA. CONTRARY TO THE PATTERN OF THE PAST TWO YEARS, POLITICAL ACTIVITIES ARE NOT CONFINED ONLY TO ORGANIZERS OF STUDENT FRONTS; THERE SEEMS NOW TO BE A CONFIDENTIAL

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WIDER PARTICIPATION. AT THE MOMENT, THE POLITICING HAS BEEN GENERALLY CONFINED TO THE CENTRAL CAMPUS AROUND THE ARTS FACULTY BUILDING AND POLICE HAVE MADE NO EFFORT TO INTERVENE. (ON SEVERAL ODCCASIONS, ACCORDING TO THE PRO VICE CHANCELWOR, THE STUDENTS OCCUPIED THE ADMINIS- TRATION BUILDING AND DISPERSED ONLY AT NIGHTFALL.) THE STUDENTS HAVE CONFINED THEIR DEMANDS TO THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS AND THE RETURN TO OPEN POLITICS, BUT IF THEY SHOULD BEGIN SUPPORTING A PARTICULAR INDIVIDUAL OR CALLING FOR ZIA'S OVERTHROW, CAMPUS POLITICS COULD TURN UGLY QUICKLY. BERGESEN

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